

Adjustment centre gets much-needed funding

By DONALDA ROOYAKKERS
Post Staff Writer

PORT HAWKESBURY — Displaced workers of Premium Automotive Ltd. who still haven't found jobs will continue to reap the services from an adjustment centre that was given more operational funding Friday.

The action centre will stay in operation until Feb. 28 due to a \$10,000 contribution from Canada Employment Centre and a \$5,000 cheque from the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) union.

The centre opened in Port Hawkesbury on Feb. 22, 1993 to address the needs of 62 unionized employees left jobless after the owners of

the gas tank manufacturing plant abruptly closed the operation on Feb. 1, 1993. The centre provides counselling and referral services to the displaced workers in order to put them back into the workforce.

Since February, the centre has put two-thirds of those employees into new jobs or retraining opportunities, according to staffer Mal-

colm Beaton, one of two former employees running the office.

He said all but three former workers have been employed in the Strait area or are attending training courses here. Beaton says between 13 to 20 people have yet to be placed in employment or training and he is optimistic that the centre can have those needs addressed before it closes.

The office was initially expected to close on Aug. 31 but additional funding from CEC extended its lifespan until Nov. 30. Friday's extension will keep the service running long enough to celebrate an anniversary.

A total of \$56,573 in federal funds have been committed to the centre.

Service exchange questioned

By WEN STEWART
Post Staff Writer

There will be winners and losers when the province and the municipalities exchange service responsibilities as part of a municipal reform package announced Friday by Municipal Affairs Minister Sandy Jolly.

It won't happen until April 1995 when the province will assume full financial responsibility for social assistance.

"For us to develop a consensus (of the impact on municipal units) is going to be difficult," said Warden John Coady, who appreciated Jolly for bringing it to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) before going public.

"It indicates to me her concern to develop a dialogue with us."

Coady said an overview committee struck by the minister will determine the level of impact and will consult all municipal units for feedback.

The UNSM president is gratified Jolly has abandoned the old reform stipulation on boundaries that was included in the original study.

"I'm disappointed the government does not have the financial resources to take over the full cost of education," Coady said.

Service reallocation will result in the province assuming the full costs of social services, justice and health. Municipal governments will take over costs of police, some local roads, will contribute to the cost of other local roads, and will continue to share in the cost of corrections.

"Most of the services the province is assuming should be financed by the broad provincial tax base, and not affected by local differences in ability to pay," Jolly said.

As warden of the County of Cape Breton, Coady is "very concerned" the kind of financial impact the service change will have on the county.

"We are talking basically \$2 million in additional operating costs.

At first blush that translates into a 17 per cent increase in municipal taxes.

The county is one of the more affluent units that enjoys a high commercial assessment base. Coady says the county is at a disadvantage because the equalization program or revenue sharing is based on commercial assessment.

Coady says the revenue tax will amount to about 40 cents per \$100 of assessment. The province already levies 39 cents for every \$100 of assessment for education.

In exchange for the province taking over social assistance costs, the county will pick up the cost to serve and maintain subdivision roads, police services and one-half the cost of assessing properties.

It will also pay into a local road levy to help pay the cost of maintaining roads across the province.

"I would love to see it happen April, 1994," said Sydney Mayor Vince MacLean, but added that he felt that would not be realistic. He admits it is going to cost the provincial taxpayer money to make the shift.

It is a positive switch for Sydney, with the province picking up the cost of social services (\$10 million). That's about one-quarter of the city budget.

"In return we will have to pay the cost of policing and we are doing that now."

The province will no longer cost share public transit.

"After all the exchanges, we end up \$900,000 better off."

That compares to a \$1,964 million cost to the county, \$300,000 for 140 million, and \$230,000 for Sydney Mines. Benefitting from the services switch are New Waterford with \$457,000 and North Sydney with \$337,000.

The mayor said the services swap is "basically a modest start."

There are no initiatives for regional services or amalgamated government.



SHADES OF WINTER—Shane Brown, a traffic signalman with Nova Scotia Power, was well dressed on Friday morning for the winter chill that was in the air. Brown was on the Westmount Road, complete with hood, face mask, hat, coveralls and his glasses worn outside the face mask while work crews carried out their tasks in the background.

Photo by Ray Pacey

Exchange benefits urban areas

By BETSY CHAMBERS
Thomson News Service

HALIFAX — Urban municipalities are poised to be the big winners in the re-apportionment of service responsibilities proposed Friday by Municipal Affairs Minister Sandy Jolly.

With some notable exceptions the losers, according to the Provincial Municipal Service Exchange, a Discussion Paper, will be rural municipalities.

Halifax, for instance stands to gain financial relief worth \$7.7 million, based on 1992-93 figures, while Dartmouth would save \$3.2 million and Sydney would reap \$954,000 in savings for its taxpayers.

On the other hand, property tax-

change, but it cannot cost either level of government more than at present.

Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs Ed Cramm explained the trade-off is designed to be almost revenue neutral between the two levels of government but he agreed there will be inequalities among individual municipalities.

The calculations are all based on 1992-93 figures and he cautioned the numbers for 1993-94 and 1994-95 for adversely affected municipalities will be better because municipal social services costs, which the provincial government plans to assume, have gone up significantly in those fiscal years.

Total savings for public health and welfare costs in 1992-93, under

ing' fund to which all units would contribute through a uniform levy on their uniform commercial assessment.

The discussion paper says, "the fund will then be distributed among the municipal units according to their needs," which are to be objectively determined.

Although the formula for distributing the funds has not been decided, the discussion paper suggests it be done along the lines of the present municipal operating grants.

Jolly said she wants a formula that does not reward financial mismanagement. Cramm indicated the formula would take into account

Beating trial producing odd twists

By STEVE MACINNIS
Post Staff Writer

A Sydney man charged with the brutal beating of a Victoria County woman denied all charges against him Friday in taking the stand in his own defence.

"I'd say they are totally untrue," said Parker Douglas Rudderham.

Rudderham, 38, described how he aided the woman last May 10 when she returned from a jog, holding her side and in a tremendous amount of pain.

"I could see her coming and that she was doubled over. She was pale, trembling and crying. She told me she fell," said Rudderham.

His evidence was contrary to that of the woman, who can't be identified. She alleged her injuries were the result of a beating by Rudderham.

Rudderham has pleaded not guilty on two counts of assault and one count each of sexual assault and assault causing bodily harm.

The woman spent two weeks in hospital and a doctor has testified to the extent of her injuries which included a broken rib and multiple bruising.

"He picked me up and threw me like a sack of potatoes onto the floor," said the woman, in recounting events of last May at her home.

But Rudderham said he helped the woman when she returned from her jog and he eventually drove her to the hospital.

The woman has told provincial court Judge Stan Campbell she drove herself to the hospital.

In other testimony Friday, the woman's eldest son said when he visited his mother in the hospital with Rudderham, he heard the accused apologizing for hurting her and telling her that he loved her.

Defence lawyer Darcy MacPherson has spent considerable time attempting to cast the woman's son as the one responsible for the woman's injuries.

In an unusual twist, both the woman and the son were subpoenaed to testify by the defence.

Throughout Friday's proceedings, Campbell interjected several times, cautioning MacPherson that he was cross examining his own witnesses. At one point, the judge appeared bewildered as to the direction of the defence.

"It's marginal as far as I'm concerned," said Campbell, in reference to MacPherson's line of questioning.

Campbell told MacPherson he had granted him considerable leeway in addressing the possibility of the son's involvement but ended the questioning, saying it had produced nothing of significance.

The son's answers to MacPherson's questions were short, quick and somewhat ambiguous.

"He's reluctant," said the judge to MacPherson. "Does that surprise you?"

When the trial resumes Monday, Jan. 10, Crown Attorney Doug Lloy will conduct his cross examination of Rudderham.

The Crown has completed its case after calling three witnesses. Rudderham, who has been in custody at the correctional centre since his arrest in May, is the sixth witness to testify for the defence.

Woman's memory lives on through special quilt

Marge MacDonald of Sydney was just finishing a quilt to be raffled in support of the Lodge that Gives when she lost her long fight against cancer Nov. 6.

As she'd planned, tickets are now being sold throughout the industrial area through the Cancer Society by various organizations including CWT, councils and other

Marine Atlantic raises fares on ferry services, Jan. 1

Marine Atlantic will be introducing a new tariff for its ferry services throughout Atlantic Canada, effective Jan. 1.

The 1994 rates show modest increases in most areas, but passenger vehicle fares will remain unchanged on certain routes where price sensitivity is a critical factor.

Most passenger fares will increase by approximately three per cent and passenger vehicle rates by a similar ratio, says Mike Gushue, vice president of passen-

three per cent range.

There will be no increase in either passenger or commercial vehicle rates on the seasonal service between Argenta and North Sydney. However, the adult passenger fare will rise slightly by 75 cents to \$47.

The adult passenger fare on the Lewisporte-Goose Bay ferry will rise by \$5 to \$85, while the automobile rate increases \$10 to \$140. Passenger fares on coastal vessels serving the isolated communities